

**OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
VIOLENT CRIME VICTIMS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

Before applying for funding under the Illinois Violent Crime Victims Act, 725 ILCS 240 (2002), please read the following material carefully to ascertain eligibility.

The Illinois General Assembly found that when crime strikes, the chief concern of criminal justice agencies has been focused on apprehending and dealing with the criminal, and that the victim or witness is frequently forgotten or further victimized by the criminal justice system. Nevertheless, the single most important determinant of whether a case is resolved is the information and assistance provided by the victim or witness.

It was, therefore, the intent of the General Assembly to provide ways of improving the rapport of victims and witnesses with the criminal justice system and to provide for faster and more complete victim recovery from the effects of crime through the establishment of victim and witness assistance centers.

Effective January 1, 1984, the Violent Crime Victims Assistance Act was enacted to help provide funding to develop a comprehensive system of victim and witness assistance. The Violent Crime Victims Assistance Fund was designated as a special fund in the State Treasury to provide monies for grants to be awarded from fines and fees collected after January 1, 1984, when a person is convicted in Illinois of a crime of violence, felony or misdemeanor, and for certain offenses listed in the Illinois Vehicle Code.

The Illinois Attorney General has been charged with the responsibility of administering the program, including the responsibility of selecting applicants who are deemed qualified under this Act for designation to receive funding for the establishment and operation of victim and witness assistance centers.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Any public or private non-profit agency may apply to the Attorney General for selection and funding as a victim and witness assistance center under this Act. "Agency" or "agencies" means any federal, state, local, or private entity which provides, operates, or coordinates victim and witness assistance programs.

To be eligible for funding, each applicant agency shall provide one or more of the following services for victims and/or witnesses of violent crime:

1. Provide assistance to victims of violent crime and their families in obtaining assistance through other official or community resources;
2. Provide elderly victims of crime with services appropriate to their special needs;
3. Provide transportation and/or household assistance to those victims participating in the criminal justice process;
4. Provide victims of domestic and sexual violence with services appropriate to their special needs;
5. Provide courthouse reception and guidance, including explanation of unfamiliar procedures and bilingual information;
6. Provide in-person or telephone hot-line assistance to victims;
7. Provide special counseling facilities and rehabilitation services to victims;
8. Provide public education on crime and crime victims;
9. Provide training and sensitization for persons who work with victims of crime;
10. Provide special counseling facilities and rehabilitation services for child victims of sex offenses;
11. Coordinate volunteers to work with criminal justice agencies to provide direct victim services and/or to establish community support; and
12. Provide other services as the Violent Crimes Advisory Commission shall deem appropriate to further the purposes of this Act.

GOALS OF CENTERS/SERVICES PROVIDED

All services and practices of each agency applying for funding as a victim and witness assistance center shall further or implement the following goals:

1. Assist the criminal justice agencies in giving more consideration and personal attention to victims and witnesses of violent crime;
2. Sensitize law enforcement officials and others who come into contact with crime victims and witnesses;
3. Attempt to decrease the incidence of unreported crimes;
4. Assure that victims and witnesses are informed of their rights and the progress of the cases in which they are involved; and
5. Encourage public use of the services made available under this Act.

ATTORNEY GENERAL'S GUIDELINES

Each application is evaluated independently. The Office of the Attorney General shall consider the following factors in selecting applicants to receive funds and to be designated as victim and witness assistance centers:

1. Stated goals of applicants;
2. Commitment and ability to provide services described in the eligibility criteria and in the application submitted for consideration, including but not limited to programmatic expertise, experience of the staff and board and available resources;
3. Number of people to be served and the needs of the community;
4. Evidence of community support;
5. Organizational structure of the agency;
6. Use of volunteers;
7. Overall statewide geographic service distribution;
8. Crime rates;
9. Services to underserved victims; and
10. Existing programs and the development of new services.

RESTRICTIONS

Applications will not be considered for the funding for any of the following purposes:

1. Debt retirement;
2. Capital/building campaigns;
3. Scholarships;
4. Research projects;
5. Individual service providers; and
6. Non-Illinois based programs.

GRANT AWARDS

Grant Agreements shall be entered into by the Attorney General with each grant recipient on an annual basis. Dispersal of grant funds shall be made on a quarterly basis. The Attorney General will evaluate each recipient prior to each fund dispersal and may cancel the remaining term of

any contract in which the recipient has failed to meet the contract requirements or for any good cause.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Application packages must be completed in their entirety. An application will not be accepted or considered if the application:

- I. is missing required documentation, or**
- II. is not submitted in the correct font, or**
- III. does not comply with page limitations, or spacing or margin requirements.**

Joint applications between two or more agencies are welcome. However, the funding of a joint application must result in the disbursement of grant funds to one of the applicants. If grant funds are requested to be disbursed to more than one agency, separate applications must be submitted.

NOTIFICATION PROCESS

All applicants will be notified regarding funding decisions by letter.